

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00

INRE-00 ACDA-07 AGR-05 AID-05 CEA-01 CEQ-01 CG-00

CIAE-00 CIEP-01 COME-00 DLOS-06 DOTE-00 EB-07 EPA-01

ERDA-05 FEAE-00 FMC-01 TRSE-00 H-02 INR-07 INT-05

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6098

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION NATO

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

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USDOCOSOUTH

USDOCOLANDSOUTHEAST

USNMR SHAPE

CINCUSNAVEUR

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TAGS: PFOR, PLOS, GR, TU

SUBJECT: REACTION TO GOG'S COURSE OF ACTION ON THE SISMIK I
DISPUTE

REF: (A) ATHENS 8137 (B) ATHENS 8150

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1. SUMMARY: THE GOG'S DECISION TO GO TO THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL AND UNILATERALLY TO SEEK CLARIFICATION FROM THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE OF THE ISSUES IN ITS DISPUTE WITH TURKEY OVER THE CONTINENTAL SHELF IN THE AEGEAN DOMINATED THE NEWS HERE TODAY (AUGUST 10). IN GENERAL, PUBLIC REACTION HAS BEEN SUPPORTIVE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S ANNOUNCED COURSE OF ACTION, ALTHOUGH THERE HAVE ALSO BEEN CALLS FOR MORE FORCEFUL ACTION. AFTER HIS PRIVATE MEETING YESTERDAY MORNING WITH THE PRIME MINISTER, PRINCIPAL OPPOSITION LEADER GEORGE MAVROS OF THE UNION OF THE DEMOCRATIC CENTER (UDS) ACKNOWLEDGED HIS AGREEMENT WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO BRING THE ISSUE BEFORE THE SECURITY COUNCIL. HOWEVER, HIS SUPPORT WAS QUALIFIED WHEN HE AGAIN ARGUED AT LENGTH ON THE NEED TO SUSPEND IMMEDIATELY THE BASE NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE U.S. HE ALSO REPEATED HIS CRITICISM OF NATO AS AN OBSOLETE INSTITUTION. OPPOSITION PASOK LEADER, ANDREAS PAPANDREOU, FOLLOWING HIS OWN BRIEFING WITH CARAMANLIS, EXPRESSED DISAGREEMENT WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY AND CHARGED ONCE AGAIN THAT THE GOG WAS NOT ACTING WITH ADEQUATE "FORCE" AGAINST THE TURKS. END SUMMARY.

2. THE AEGEAN CRISIS WITH TURKEY CONTINUES TO DOMINATE THE NEWS THROUGHOUT GREECE. THE GOG'S ANNOUNCED DECISION TO APPEAL TO THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL AND UNILATERALLY TO GO TO THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE WERE THE MAIN ISSUES IN FOCUS. GENERALLY, PUBLIC REACTION HAS BEEN SUPPORTIVE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S ANNOUNCED INTENTION TO CONTINUE TO SEEK A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF THE CRISIS THROUGH DIPLOMATIC ACTIONS. HOWEVER, THE SOLIDARITY BEHIND THE GOVERNMENT'S MODERATE COURSE OF ACTION IS NOT UNANIMOUS AND THERE HAVE BEEN CALLS FOR MORE "FORCEFUL ACTION", ESPECIALLY BY PASOK LEADER ANDREAS PAPANDREOU, WHOSE PROCLAMATIONS HAVE MADE A SPLASH.

3. EVEN MODERATE GEORGE MAVROS, PRESIDENT OF THE UNION OF THE DEMOCRATIC CENTER (UDC) PARTY, HAS SHOWN HIMSELF TO BE NOT WHOLLY SATISFIED WITH THE GOG'S POLICY BY CALLING AGAIN FOR THE IMMEDIATE SUSPENSION OF THE NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE U.S. OVER THE STATUS OF AMERICAN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BASES IN GREECE. MAVROS ENDORSED THE GOG'S DECISION TO BRING THE AEGEAN DISPUTE BEFORE THE SECURITY COUNCIL, BUT STRESSED THAT THE BASE TALKS MUST CEASE. HE SAID THAT EVEN IF THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PARLIAMENT APPROVE THE BASES AGREEMENT, THE PEOPLE WILL NOT. "IN GREECE, THE PEOPLE ARE DEFINITELY AGAINST THEM. THE U.S. IS FOLLOWING A POLICY WHICH STRENGTHENS THE TURKISH ARMED FORCES, WHICH IS TO SAY, THE FORCES OF THAT COUNTRY WHICH

IS THREATENING GREECE." MAVROS POINTED TO THE WARM RECEPTION ACCORDED FORMER TURKISH PRIME MINISTER ECEVIT IN THE U.S. RECENTLY AND CHARGED "IT IS SIGNIFICANT THAT, AS SOON AS HE HAD LEFT THE WHITE HOUSE, MR. ECEVIT MADE A STATEMENT ON THE AEGEAN. PERHAPS THE WHOLE SETTING WAS DELIBERATELY CONSTRUCTED TO ENCOURAGE TURKISH ARBITRARINESS IN THE AEGEAN." IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, MAVROS CONTINUED IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO CONTINUE DISCUSSIONS ABOUT BASES INTENDED FOR NATO DEFENSE PURPOSES WHEN GREECE IS BEING THREATENED NOT FROM OUTSIDE THE ALLIANCE BUT BY A "NATO MEMBER-COUNTRY". THE UDC LEADER REPEATED HIS CHARGE THAT NATO WAS AN OBSOLETE INSTITUTION. HE SAID THAT NATO HAD BEEN FOUNDED AS AN ALLIANCE UNDER AMERICAN CONTROL BASED ON THE U.S. NUCLEAR DETERRENT AND A U.S. MONOPOLY OF THERMONUCLEAR WEAPONS. THE U.S. MONOPOLY NO LONGER HOLDS TRUE TODAY, AND "THE PROBLEM OF PEACE AND SECURITY" SHOULD BE EXAMINED IN LIGHT OF ACTUAL REALITIES, HE CONCLUDED.

4. FOLLOWING HIS MEETING WITH THE PRIME MINISTER AND IN A LETER STATEMENT LAST NIGHT PASOK LEADER ANDREAS PAPANDREOU AGAIN CRITICIZED THE MODERATION WITH WHICH THE GOG IS HANDLING THE AGEAN SITUATION. HE REFERRED TO THE 1958 GENEVA CONVENTION AS THE BASIS FOR THE GREEK POSITION AND SAID THAT THE TURKISH SEISMOGRAPHIC ACTIVITY IN WATERS ABOVE THE GREEK CONTINENTAL SHELF HAD VIOLATED "OUR NATIONAL SPACE. THE REPLY OUGHT TO HAVE BEEN THE SAME AS THOUGH THE TURKISH ARMED FORCES HAD VIOLATED OUR TERRITORIAL SPACE." HE CONCLUDED WITH THE STATEMENT "I BELIEVE THAT THESE ARE EXTREMELY GRAVE DANGERS WHICH HAVE BEEN THREATENING AND ARE CONTINUING TO THREATED THE NATION AND MUST BE DEALT WITH FIRMLY AND RESOLUTELY IF THEY ARE NOT TO LEAD TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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UNFAVORABLE RESULTS."

5. MEDIA REACTION HAS BEEN GENERALLY SUPPORTIVE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICIES, BUT EDITORIALY SOME CRITICISM HAS ALSO SURFACED. THE FAR LEFT ESSENTIALLY ENDORSED THE GOG'S ACTIONS TO DATE, BUT CALLED FOR A GREATER INDEPENDENCE IN GREEK FOREIGN POLICY. SOME SECTORS CALLED FOR A MORE VIGOROUS REACTION FROM THE GOVERNMENT TO THE "TURKISH PROVOCATIONS" IN THE AEGEAN. PRO-POSOK ATHINAIKI, WHICH CATEGORIZES THE GOVERNMENT'S ACTIONS AS "PAPER WAR" AND "WAR OF NOTES" WENT SO FAR AS TO SUGGEST THAT CARAMANLIS SHOULD LEAVE OFFICE IF HE DOES NOT UNDERSTAND THE POPULAR FEELING THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD TAKE A FORCEFUL STAND AGAINST TURKEY. THROUGHOUT THE

PRESS, BANNER HEADLINES PROCLAIM THAT GREECE IS GOING TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL AND WILL UNILATERALLY GO TO THE INTERNATIONAL COURT AS WELL. THE NEWS ACCOUNTS ARE BASICALLY STRAIGHTFORWARD, WITH REPORTING ON THE GOVERNMENT'S DECISIONS AND REPRINTS OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S STATEMENT OF LAST NIGHT, THE SECOND GOG NOTE TO TURKEY AND THE STATEMENTS OF THE OPPOSITION LEADERS.

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6. INDEPENDENT KATHIMERINI LEADS THE PRO-GOVERNMENT CHORUS IN A LONG EDITORIAL ENTITLED "CALM AND POWERFUL". AFTER EXAMINING THE BACKGROUND TO THE TURKISH "PROVOCATIONS", THE EDITORIAL INDICATES THE GOG COULD HAVE RESPONDED IN A VARIETY OF WAYS, BUT CHOSE THE PROPER COURSE IN GOING TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL. THAT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE GOG IS PURSUING PEACEFUL MEASURES IS NEITHER A SIGH OF WEAKNESS NOR A LACK OF DECISIVENESS, CONTINUES THE EDITORIAL. IN CONCLUSION, IT CALLS FOR A STRENGTHENING OF ALL SECTORS OF THE GREEK NATION FOR THIS CRISIS MAY BE LONG IN DURATION. GREECE MUST BE PREPARED AND STRONG IN ORDER TO RESIST SUCCESSFULLY AND TO SECURE THE NATION'S FUTURE. AS DO OTHER JOURNALS, PRO-GOVERNMENT ACROPOLIS LIKEWISE ENDORSES THE GOG'S CALM APPROACH TO THE CRISIS, AND SAYS THAT ONLY THE GOVERNMENT IS IN A POSITION TO KNOW BEST WHAT ARE THE MOST FITTING MEASURES TO HANDLE THE "TURKISH PROVOCATIONS". THE GOG IS NOT INFLUENCED BY THE CRIES OF "HOTBLOODED" IRRESPONSIBLE INDIVIDUALS WHO WOULD PURSUE THE WRONG COURSES OF ACTION, SAYS ACROPOLIS.

7. INDEPENDENT, OPPOSITION TO VIMA, ON THE OTHER HAND, STRESSED EDITORIALY THAT "IMPERTINENCE MUST BE MET WITH DECISIVENESS". ONLY IN THIS WAY WILL THE TURKS AND THOSE WHO BACK THEM CHANGE THEIR TACTICS. PRAISING THE HIGH LEVEL OF UNITY AMONG THE GREEK PEOPLE, THE EDITORIAL CONTINUED THAT WORDS AND ACTIONS MUST BE CLOSELY LINKED, AND THAT IF THE "PIRATE VESSEL SHOULD DO IT AGAIN, THEN IT MUST BE CAPTURED RIGHT AWAY". THE EDITORIAL CONCLUDED THAT WITH THE PEOPLE AND THE ARMED FORCES UNITED, READY AND DETERMINED, THIS IS "THE ONLY ANSWER WHICH WILL SAVE THE PEACE AND OUR SOVEREIGN RIGHTS". THIS BASIC APPROACH IS SECONDED BY TO VIMA'S AFTERNOON SISTER PAPER TA NEA WHICH PREACHES THAT THE "PRECONDITION FOR VICTORY" IS TO ATTACK TURKEY FIRST.

8. RIGHT WING ELEFTHEROS COSMOS IS CRITICAL OF THE GOVERNMENT IN ITS FRONT PAGE EDITORIAL "WHERE ARE WE GOING". IT REPEATS ITS PREVIOUS ASSERTION THAT THE GOG'S MODERATE POLICIES ARE CREATING AN ATMOSPHERE OF HUMILIATION AND GIVE THE IMPRESSION GREECE IS FLOUNDERING IN HER FOREIGN POLICY, INDICATING IT WILL COMMENT FURTHER LATER. CONSERVATIVE ESTIA ALSO REFLECTS THIS ATTITUDE THAT THE GOG HAS NOT SHOWN DETERMINED LEADERSHIP. THE COMMUNIST PRESS, IN CONTRAST, FAVORS THE GOG'S RECOURSE TO THE UN. COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE INTERIOR'S AVGHI PRAISES THE HIGH DEGREE OF NATIONAL

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SOLIDARITY, WHICH IT INSISTS, MUST BE IMPROVED EVEN
FURTHER THROUGHOUT ALL SEGMENTS OF GREEK SOCIETY.
NEVERTHELESS, SUGGESTS THE PAPER, GREECE MUST NOW REVISE
HER FOREIGN POLICY AWAY FROM ITS PRESENT PRO-AMERICAN
ORIENTATION, INCLUDING SUSPENSION OF THE BASE NEGOTIATIONS.
AVGHI COMPLAINS, HOWEVER, THAT NOT ALL PARTIES HAVE BEEN
CONSULTED BY THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE GOG MUST OPEN UP
THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS. COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE
EXTERIOR RIZOSPASTIS BLAMES THE "IMPERIALIST FORCES"
FOR HAVING CREATED THE AEGEAN CRISIS, AND, LIKEWISE,
CALLS FOR A NEW FOREIGN POLICY INDEPENDENT OF THE U.S.
IT REPORTS THE COMMENTS OF SECRETARY GENERAL FLORAKIS
WHO FINDS MERIT IN THE MAVROS PROPOSAL TO END
IMMEDIATELY THE BASE NEGOTIATIONS. RIZOSPASTIS URGES
THAT GREECE RID ITSELF OF THE AMERICAN BASES, LEAVE
NATO RIGHT AWAY AND FOLLOW A NEW NATIONAL POLICY
FREEING HER FROM ADVENTURISM PREPARED FOR HER "BY
FRIENDLY AND ALLIED COUNTRIES".
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